

care matters



The Newsletter of Two Counties Community Care Limited

Issue 8 • DECEMBER 2009

A Christmas message from the Directors

It is no surprise that, due to economic pressures, 2009 has been a very difficult year for us all. However, thanks to the dedication and determination of our staff we are weathering those difficulties and we have placed the company in a very strong position for the years ahead. To achieve our plans staff at all levels will have to be continuously mindful of the need to be cost effective in every aspect as we all face financial constraints imposed by the Government for the foreseeable future. It is also important to achieve a positive outcome in all of the organisation's aims and objectives. Care services will only be commissioned where value for money, quality and efficiency can be clearly demonstrated.

We have extended the Live-in Care team to include a full time dedicated trainer visiting carers in their work place to update their training requirements. Undoubtedly good training is the key to providing a quality service and we thank everyone involved in achieving this success. We are delighted that our training department is now accredited with City & Guilds to self certificate NVQ Awards at levels 2 and 3 and that the hotel has proved to be a valuable asset where we can accommodate and train new staff members from overseas. In September we opened a new office in Newbury to develop our Daily Care services in that area.

In line with Government cut backs where the use of technology in the form of Tele-care Services is at the forefront, we will be launching our own Tele-care Service in the New Year. This will coincide with the launch of a Night Owl service on the Isle of Wight and will enable our Night Owl services both in Essex and on the Island to respond to Tele-care alerts.

The introduction by the Government of self directed support is also a very exciting opportunity to provide a wide range of services for the benefit of service users. An example of this is the introduction of gardening/handyman services in Essex and on the Isle of Wight which are proving to be very popular and beneficial to our service users.

The care industry continues to present new opportunities to the social care arena and we all need to remain flexible and ready to rise to and meet new challenges. However, whilst doing so we must maintain our reputation as providers of quality and person-centred care, where our ultimate goal is promoting service users' choice, dignity and independence. Thank you all very much for your support this year. We know we can continue to rely on you as we look forward to 2010.

We wish every member of staff within the organisation, and their families, a very Happy Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Marion and Dick



News from A Matter of Fact

Carol Elliot has transferred over to the training team and is now successfully providing community based training and support to the live in care team.

Congratulations to the following people on completing their NVQ's.

LEVEL 2 Caroline Capps, Lucy Githiomi, Alicya Konczak, Anne Nakitari, Sadzi-Opah Chiota, Andrzej Pucjalski.

LEVEL 3 Rita Donani, Paulette Gerussi.

LEVEL 4 Claire Ingiosi. **IV AWARD** Julie Guyon.

ASSESSOR AWARD Danielle Venables.

LEVEL 3 IN PERSONNEL PRACTICE Claire McLaughlin.

NCFE LEVEL 3 IN PALLIATIVE CARE Andrzej Pucjalski, Caroline Capps, Elzbieta Dzwonnik, Heather Pegler, Irene Sedze, Jean Humphreys, Julian Wallace, Margaret Mutandwa, Rita Donani, Tsvakai Nhave, Sofia Borca, Sylvia Valentine.

TRAIN THE TRAINER - MOVING & HANDLING OF PEOPLE Julian Wallace.

The training team would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

TV Star for a Day

Polish Two Counties' carer Alice Konczak was recently a star in a television crew's documentary about migrant workers in the UK and the reasons why there are so few British workers in the care industry.

Alice came to live and work in Great Britain in 2001 and she has been a live-in carer to her current service user since 2005. The three-man film crew arrived at lunchtime and stayed for about seven hours, shooting footage of Alice's working day as she performed many household tasks, some gardening activities and cared for her service user's personal requirements (including looking after the dog). The crew asked lots of questions throughout the day, both to Alice and her service user. Alice said, "It was an interesting day but I found it very tiring. I like what I do but not everyone could do this."

Sadly the film will not be broadcast on the big screen. It was made as part of the training of cameraman Marvin. Nonetheless, it was a very different experience for one of our highly valued carers and a film that demonstrated the importance of the work all our carers do to enable people to continue to lead independent lives in their own homes with the level of support appropriate to their individual needs.

www.twocounties.co.uk



Two Counties on the Road



We have recently become the proud owners of a 1972 Morris Minor Van which complements the advertising trailer we have purchased.

The trailer has been fitted with display boards describing the services we are able to offer under the self directed support scheme.

The trailer has made appearances over the summer months at a number of

shows on the Isle of Wight and various towns in Essex to help promote our services and recruit staff to the company.

Welcome to the World

We have two new mums in our Essex staff - Jennie Fearn, who gave birth on 31st March to Macey Olivia, and Joanne Baxter whose baby girl was born in June.

Tele-care Alarm Response Service

In order to be able to respond appropriately to the Tele-care alerts of many of our service users, we have made the decision to set up our own alarm and responder service. The Government initiative to develop self directed support (which includes Tele-care interventions to enable people to remain safely and live more independently within their own homes) has prompted this decision.

The system we are looking to set up will offer a holistic service which takes the alert and allows us to respond appropriately, including tracking the alerts and the response cars to see where the nearest responder is. The system has the benefit of being able to track a wander alert and pinpoint where the person is, enabling the response car to pick them up and return them safely home. We are able to respond 24 hours per day, giving relatives and friends the assurance that when an alarm is raised they will not be expected to respond themselves if this is their choice.

There is a wide range of alerts available and for people over the age of 80 there is grant funding available for the supply of their alarm for the first twelve months of service. This service will be available mid January 2010.

News from the Island Carers' Support Service

There have been many changes over the past couple of months, most of them concerning staff. We have said goodbye to Elizabeth Douglas who was one of our original 'Crossroads' carer support workers, also to Faye Morgan, and wish them both well for the future. We would like to officially welcome the following new staff: Patricia Redhead, Martin Langford, Claire Butler and Kelly Davis. They have settled into the team well and we are already receiving extremely positive feedback from both service users and care managers. Keep up the good work!

Nicola Davis recently married and is now Mrs Nicola Melville. Marriage obviously suits her as she hasn't stopped smiling since. We are also very pleased to announce that the wife of Roger Flynn, our senior CSW, is expecting a baby. Our very best wishes go out to both of them. And lastly, I have recently become a grandmother again at a remarkably tender young age!

We continue to see a marked increase in the amount of service users being awarded additional hours by Social Services. In some cases it has been because their condition is such that care homes are unable to offer them weekly respite or day care, but in other cases it has been because Social Services simply prefers to choose to increase our hours. This is very gratifying and evidence that we must be getting it right somewhere. We are also seeing an increase in the number of service users who pop into the office to say hello and thank us for the care & support which our carer support workers give them. I would therefore like to pass on their thanks and add: **You're all doing a great job and we need to remember that a company is only as good as its workers – THANK YOU ☺**

On a more sombre note we have recently had to say goodbye to some old friends and our heartfelt condolences go to their families. It has been a privilege to be able to support them.

I would like to end by wishing everyone a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Cherry Kingdom, Registered Manager



A Christmas Puzzle Answer: Just the one. After that it isn't an empty sack any more.

ISLE OF WIGHT NEWS

Children In Need

On November 20th we held a raffle with 25 prizes donated by the office staff. Tickets were £1 each. Ruth rattled the collecting tin at every visitor to the building and shook all the loose change from their pockets. We raised a grand total of £102 for the BBC appeal.



Help For Heroes

The company kindly sponsored the Ventnor Angling Club Fishing Weekend on November 19th and 20th with a very generous donation of £300. Lynne Clarke (Assistant Manager) had the honour of presenting the cheque to the winning fisherman. The Club also held a raffle, with the money collected going to the Help For Heroes charity.



Christmas Get Together

On Tuesday 22nd December we will be holding a Christmas get-together for our carers, when hot turkey baguettes will be on offer along with desserts and soft drinks. One carer will also win a hamper of goodies which has been provided by the office staff, and Father Christmas is rumoured to be making an appearance too.

All the office staff on the Isle of Wight would like to wish their carers and service users a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

A Christmas Puzzle Question

How many gifts can Father Christmas fit into his empty sack?

Answer upside down at bottom of page.

Editors Note

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this newsletter.

Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.